



## Homelessness in the Thomas Jefferson Planning District On January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Sixth Annual Homeless Census & Point In Time Count

The Thomas Jefferson Area Coalition for the Homeless (TJACH) collected the data for this survey January 29-31, 2008. Surveys were distributed to shelter providers and social service agencies in the Thomas Jefferson Planning District, and taken by survey teams to homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and various street and outdoors locations. Shelters reported capacity and occupancy as of January 30<sup>th</sup>.

292 people were found to be homeless on January 30<sup>th</sup>. 231 homeless adults with 46 dependent children were residing in emergency transitional or permanent supportive facilities. (There were 206 sheltered adults and 22 children in 2007.) 15 more persons of the 67 surveyed said they were unsheltered. As the number of people who were physically located, this represents the least possible number. Schools, who use different reporting criteria, reported 354 children homeless: in shelters, doubled up, in motels, or in substandard housing (303 in 2007).

During the survey, temperatures ranged between 18 and 58 degrees, with temperatures above normal on two days, and below normal on the other one. Emergency shelters were below capacity, but most transitional housing facilities were at or near capacity. Last year temperatures were between 19 and 41 with light snow one day.

January 29: high temp 58°, low temp 28° — morning rain

January 30: high temp 49°, low temp 24° — morning rain

January 31: high temp 46°, low temp 18° — partly cloudy

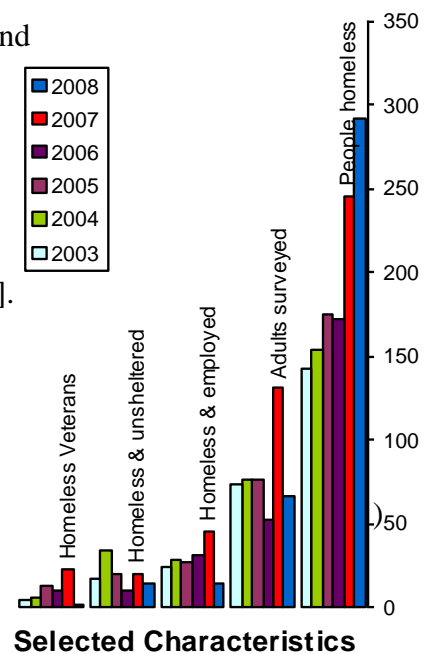
### General Findings

The consensus from service providers is that, while the number of people reported homeless grew slightly because of better count and counting more shelters, the number of homeless people has actually grown. The number of people found unsheltered fell. The increase in the number of children in shelter is significant. There were no confirmed reports of children unsheltered.

Those interviewed reporting **veteran status** dropped to 3%.  
[7% in 2003, 8% in 2004, 18% in 2005, 19% in 2006, 18% in 2007].

45% reported having difficulty getting help with **dental problems**.  
(back up from 20% in 2006)

The number of **chronic homeless**, primarily reported by shelters, rose to 82 from 31 in 2007 (48 in 2006).



# HOMELESSNESS IN THE THOMAS JEFFERSON PLANNING DISTRICT JANUARY 30<sup>TH</sup>, 2008

## General Characteristics

Gender: male 69% female: 31%  
Average age: 41.43

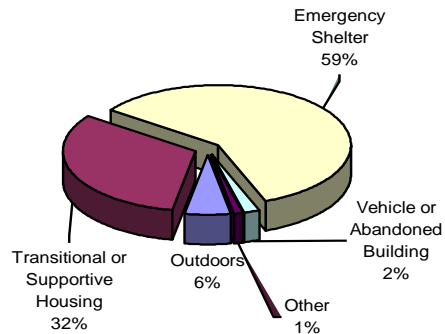
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>People homeless</b>	143	155	175	173	266	292
Sheltered	125	129	154	163	238	277
Unsheltered	18	35	21	10	28	15

## Circumstances

Most found homeless were living in shelters. 15 adults unsheltered said they were living outdoors, or in abandoned buildings. The total number of people homeless is a combination of the number living in shelters and the number living without shelter. People living in overcrowded conditions or substandard housing were not counted as homeless.

- 11% had been homeless less than 30 days
- 46% had been homeless less than 6 months

## Where did adults who were homeless spend last night?

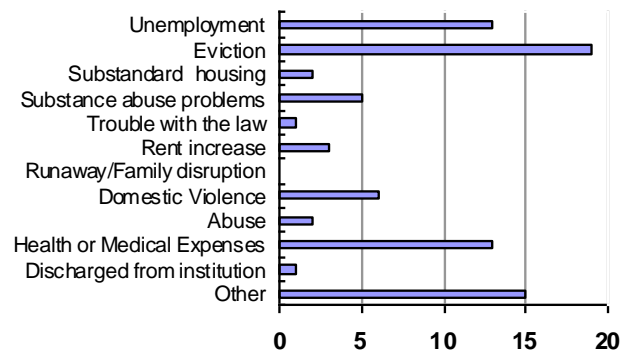


## Education Level

- 13% had a technical, vocational or college degree
- 69% had completed high school or equivalency
- 30% had not finished high school

## Reasons for Leaving Prior Housing

Respondents were asked about their reasons for leaving their prior housing. Eviction, unemployment, and health expenses were the most commonly cited reasons. In 2008, evictions again outranked unemployment as the leading cause cited for homelessness.

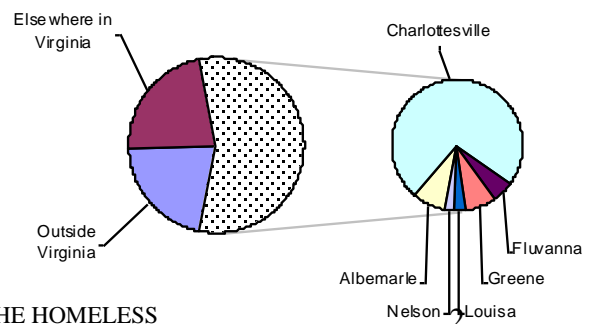


Eviction	41%
Unemployment	28%
Domestic violence	13%
Rent increase	6%

## Origins

63% of those homeless were from within the Planning District.  
46% called Charlottesville their hometown.  
23% were from elsewhere in Virginia.

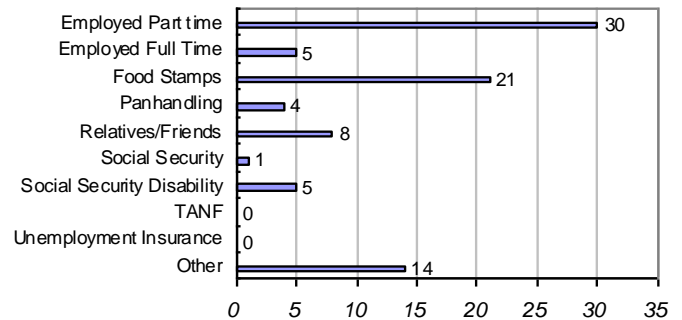
## By hometown



# HOMELESSNESS IN THE THOMAS JEFFERSON PLANNING DISTRICT JANUARY 30<sup>TH</sup>, 2008

## Sources of Income

The most common source of income for the homeless continued to be employment. The majority had not received any public assistance funds in the last six months. Only a few had received Social Security retirement or SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance).



Few people who were homeless had engaged in panhandling in the previous six months.

## Employment

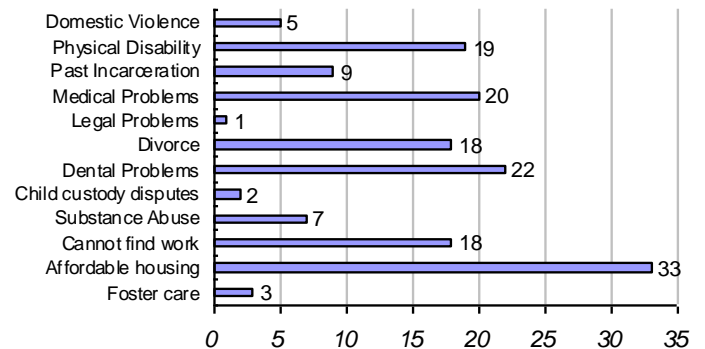
- Employment among homeless adults fell to 24% from 39% in 2007.
- 53% had worked full or part time in the last 30 days, up from 46% in 2007.

## Families

- 8% of those surveyed were homeless with dependent children
- 31% of homeless adults were divorced
- 13% of homeless adults cited domestic violence or abuse as a cause of their homelessness

## Other Factors

The most commonly identified challenge was an inability to find affordable housing, followed by dental problems, physical disabilities, medical problems and inability to find work.

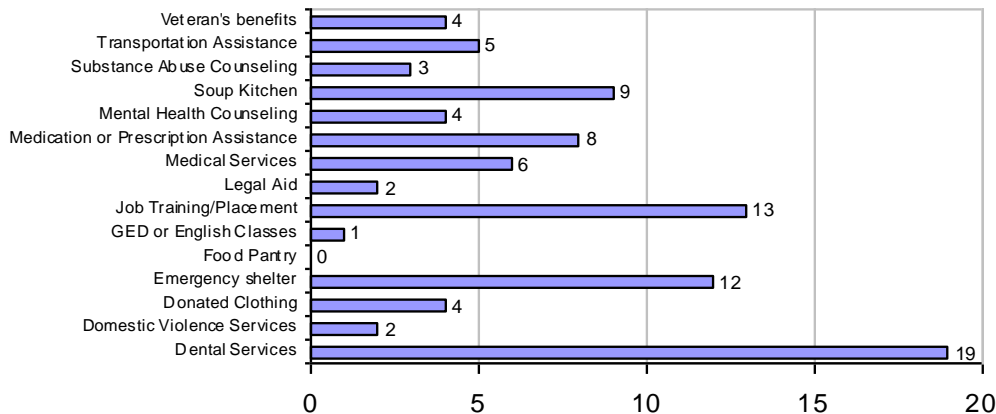


## Unmet needs

The number reporting difficulty accessing shelter fell from 28% in 2007 to 25% in 2008. The number reporting untreated dental problems fell from 47% in 2007 to 39% in 2008.

# HOMELESSNESS IN THE THOMAS JEFFERSON PLANNING DISTRICT JANUARY 30<sup>TH</sup>, 2008

**“Within the past year have you needed any of the following services and been unable to obtain them?”**



## Census Undercount

It is difficult to get an accurate count of how many people are homeless, in part because the number is always fluctuating. Information regarding the homeless was gathered in urban areas, and less is known about the rural homeless. The rural homeless are more likely to be housed with extended family, and therefore not homeless by strict HUD definition, or living in tents, vehicles, or in the woods, and therefore difficult to locate. The net result is that any census count will be an undercount of the homeless population and omit significant groups of individuals. Despite these limitations, an empirical census is still the most accurate approach to homeless enumeration. Based on the nature and population of the region, the widely accepted methodology of Martha R. Burt of the Urban Institute would predict a total homeless population, over the course of the year, of 1168 people.

## Definition of Homeless

The definition of homelessness used is that of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (H.U.D.), and is based on the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 and its subsequent revisions. In this context, a homeless person is defined as 1.) an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; or 2.) an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is either a.) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations, b.) an institution that provides temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or c.) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

This definition includes adults and children living in places not meant for human habitation, including abandoned buildings and vehicles, and those in emergency or transitional shelters. It does not include those living in substandard housing or overcrowded conditions, or those imprisoned or detained pursuant to an Act of Congress or State law. It also excludes the 12 adults living temporarily with friends or family who responded to the survey.

## Chronic Homeless

The definition of a chronically homeless person is an unaccompanied disabled individual who has been continuously homeless for over one year or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.